

The Holy Seed :
OR, THE
L I F E
OF
Mr. THOMAS BEARD.

Wrote by Himself :
With some Account of his Death,
September 15. 1710.

Soon after he had compleated the
17th Year of his Age.

WITH HIS
FUNERAL SERMON.

By J^OS. PORTER. K

With a Preface by the late Reverend Mr. *Matth. Henry.*

The THIRD EDITION, with Enlargements from his own Manuscripts.

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at the Bible and three Crowns near Mercers Chappel in Cheap-side, and D. JACKSON,
at the Bible and three Crowns in the Poultry. 1715.

Thomas L. M. C.



TO

Mr. *Richard Beard,*

BROTHER

TO THE

DECEASED.

SIR,

I Have at your Request,
ventur'd abroad into
the World, the Minutes
of your Dear Brother's
Life, left under his own

A 2 Hand,

The Dedication.

Hand, and his Funeral Sermon: Tho' I am sensible the whole Work is too plain for a *Curious*, and too serious for a *Vain* Age.

It is not indeed all; yet all I can well collect; it being wrote in Characters, and for his own private Use, with secret References.

I doubt not but it will be very grateful to you, tho' not in its Perfection: And I am sure if it be as affecting to others, as to my self, it can't fail of being considerably useful.

The Dedication.

One thing I am willing to take this Opportunity to mind you of, That you are now the last *Remain* of a very Religious Race; on Father's side and Mother's side Religious; which 'tis easy to trace through many Generations. May you live to propagate serious Piety yet further, and may it descend to the utmost Date of the Family. For, 'twould be very unhappy, if that Family should ever run Dregs, which hath been such a Spring of *pure and Chrystalline Streams*.

A 3

That

The Dedication.

That the Divine Providence may direct you, and the Grace of God fix you, in that Post in which you may best answer the Character of the *Holy Seed*, called forth, and now left alone to serve the Lord Jesus, is the sincere Wish of,

S I R,



Your most Affectionate

Servant,

Jos. Porter

TO THE
READER.

BEing favour'd with the Perusal of these Papers in Manuscript, by means of my Acquaintance with that Family, of which this Pious Young Man was a promising Branch; I am willing to say with what Pleasure I read them, and to recommend them to those of the rising Generation among us, for whose real Service and Benefit they are design'd.

It

To the Reader.

It was an observable Method, which both our Blessed Lord, and his Apostles sometimes took; to Preach a Sermon first, and then work a Miracle, for the Confirmation of it: Or to work a Miracle first, and then preach a Sermon for the Improvement of it. Miracles are now ceas'd, but (blessed be God) Preaching is not, nor the Power of the Spirit, Confirming the Word by Signs following of another Nature. You have here a very pathetic, serious Sermon; design'd to engage all young People, and particularly the Children of Godly Parents, to be sometimes Religious: And you have here join'd with it, a bright and eminent example of early Piety, and that to a Miracle of Divine Grace, which the Sermon both gives the Improvement of, and receives Confirmation from.

How

How powerful the Influence of bad Examples is, to corrupt and debauch, we see daily: I am willing to hope, that this, and other the like good Examples, may have a happy Influence upon some, by the Grace of God, to provoke them to a holy Emulation, and may serve both as the plainest Directions, and strongest Perswasives to all the Instances of serious Godliness; for it is not the Interest of any Party that this is intended to serve, but that of Pure Religion, only unmix'd and undefiled before God and the Father.

The Reflections which this Thinking, Praying Youth made upon his own Life, then, when he had but few Years to reflect upon; are here given you as they ought to be, in their own native Plainness and godly Simplicity; and tho' consider'd in themselves, there
may

may be thought nothing extraordinary in them, that they should deserve to be publish'd; yet look'd upon, as coming from one of Sixteen or Seventeen Years of Age, they are really uncommon, and upon that Account one may hope, will be the more taken Notice of by those of that Age: and to a good Christian, one truly pious Thought is worth ten fine Thoughts. And the Publishing of them may help to make some little Amends, for the mighty Loss we sustain'd by the Death of one, that was so likely to have been serviceable to his Generation. Nay, they may serve for a Copy to the ripest and oldest Christians, and may shame many that have doubled and trebled his Tears, and yet are not so well acquainted as he was with their own Spirits. The Books which that Learned and Vertuous Emperour, Marcus Antoninus, wrote *eis hauton* concerning himself,

To the Reader.

self, and to himself are very valuable Peices of Antiquity. And we shou'd all find our Hearts better, if we did more frequently retire into them; and our Lives better, if we did more frequently reflect upon them.

Perhaps, if there were such a Collection of the most remarkable Instances of Devotion, in those that were about the Age of this young Man, both which have been publish'd, and which might be gather'd up from credible Reports, as there is of those in the earlier Age, by Mr. White, in his Little Book for Little Children, and Mr. Janeway, in his Token for Children; it might be as useful in its Kind, as these have been to the Age for which they were calculated. St. John writes distinctly to Little Children, and to Young Men.

1 John 2:12, 13.

That

To the Reader.

1
That God by his Grace would
make the next Generation, wiser
and better than this, and qualify
many to be a Seed to serve Christ,
that from the Womb of the
Morning he may have the Dew
of their Youth, and the Church
the blessed Fruits of that Dew,
through a long Day, and that the
First ripe Fruits which our Souls
desire, may not be nipt, as here
they were, in the Blossom, is the
Desire and Prayer of.

A hearty Well-wisher to the
Rising Generation,

CHESTER,
March 1. 1710-11.

Matth. Henry.

I

A SHORT
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Memorable Passages
OF MY
LIFE,
THOMAS BEARD.

Give him thy Grace, O God.

WHILST I declare the
Passages of my Life, O
Holy, Eternal, Graci-
ous God, may thy Grace attend
me, that I may be affected, O!
deeply affected, with my own
Case: With thy Mercies, O Lord;
and my Sins (Father) against Hea-
ven,

ven, and before thee. I humbly thank thee for all thy Mercies, and beg thy Pardon for all my Sins; for thy dear Son's sake, send me thy Holy Spirit to work a thorough Work of Grace in me; and to assist me in this present great Work; that this Book, this Paper, this Leaf, may never come in as a Witness against me at the last. The Lord help me, that tho' my former Experiences have been of my Weakness, yea Sinfulness; yet those for the Time to come may be of my Growth in Grace, and in the Knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And now, O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; I freely give my Self, my Soul, my Body, my All, unto thee, and for ever resting upon thy Mercies in Jesus Christ, to whom, to thee, and the Holy Spirit of Grace, be Praise, everlasting Praise; for thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever, Amen, and Amen.

CHAP I.

Of my Birth-Privileges.

THE first and earliest Reflections I can make, are upon the many and great Privileges of my Birth. I can trace the Footsteps of the Grace of God from the very Womb. O would to God I had a Tongue to speak forth his Praise: And a Heart suitably affected with that Love, that Happiness, that attended me from my very Birth. Attend O my Soul!

1. I was born in a professing, reform'd, religious Nation. What a Mercy! Had I been born a Turk, a Jew, a Papist, a Heathen, I might have liv'd and died such; but blessed be God, I was born in a Protestant Gospel-Land, under the Means of Grace.

2. I was not indeed born in a Noble Family. Had it been so, I might have devoted my self to the Pleasures and vain Fashions of the World, which I find my own Inclinations

clinations lead me to ; and thus aspiring after Greatness here, I might have complimented my Soul into everlasting Misery.

The World is a bewitching Thing : It is hazardous moving in the highest Spheres. My Lot fell where I am less expos'd ; and better secur'd. I was, I bless my God, born of Parents, who had an agreeable Competency of the good Things of this World, and knew how to dispose of them for the Noblest Purposes. A sanctified Sufficiency is good Provision, yea the best Portion.

3. Yea, that which is more valuable. I was born of religious Parents, truly religious : Thanks, O Thanks be to God. It is a greater Mercy to be born of good Parents than of Princes. I was not born of Erroneous Parents, who have Zeal without Knowledge, and the Shew of Religion, without the Power and Purity of it ; who might have leaven'd my early Years with false Notions ; and so have lead me out of the Way of God, into the By-paths of Sin ; for Errors in Judgment,

ment, naturally produce Errors in Practice, and seldom one Error goes alone; for its *Name is Legion, because they are many.* But I was born of Parents who were Orthodox and Sound in the Faith, who had a good Report of all Men, and of the Truth it self: Whose Joy it would have been, to have seen their Children walking in the Truth. O that I may be a Child of Light, and not of Darknes. I was born of Parents eminent for Practical Godliness, holy, humble, obedient, attending constantly on all the Ordinances of God, conformable in their Lives to all his holy Laws, who had all the Marks of grown Christians; in Life and in Death; who are now, I doubt not, praising God in the eternal World, O that I may be a faithful Follower of them, as they were of Christ: That I may with them for ever and ever adore that distinguishing Love, that saved them, and I hope will save me too. O Lord so let it be. I was born of Praying Parents, eminent in their Duty; many a Petition did they put

up to Heaven for me, and my poor Brother. How oft, how earnestly did they beg for Mercy for theirs, that they might meet them with Comfort in the Great Day of the Lord, when Theirs had faithfully served God, and Their Generation.

“ O Lord take down the Files,
“ view over their Prayers, and re-
“ member the Children of thy Ser-
“ vants now in Glory.” The Prayers of Parents for their Children, are better than the Estates of Parents. May I never cross nor cancel one Petition. I was born of charitable Parents, of whose Charity both the Church and Strangers were Witnesses, who being dead, yet speak. They were free with their Money to supply the Necessities, and highly charitable with good Books to the Souls of Sinners, that they might encourage true Religion. A very considerable Portion of every Year's Increase was set apart for charitable Uses, and God was pleased to prosper them in all their wordly Concerns. Charity never goes unrewarded in this
Life.

Life. May I learn of them as a dear Child.

I was born of most indulgent, tender, careful Parents, who not out of Custom, but sincerely and heartily gave me up with themselves to God, in Covenant, in their private Devotion, and in the publick Ordinances: Both in Baptism, and frequently at the Table of the Lord. How can I go back? The Vows of God are upon me. I am thine, O Lord, by the most early Dedication, and thine may I be for ever and ever.

It pleas'd God to remove my dear Parents, when I was very young, so that I never remember them. I have only heard who they were, and how they liv'd: I wait to know more in the other World. I was about three Years old when my God took from me my dearest Parents, almost at the same time; so that I was Fatherless and Motherless in my very Infancy, but not Friendless; for my God took me up, as if he design'd to take the sole Care of me himself; and a very peculiar Regard he had to me.

“ Lord fill up the Relations
 “ Death hath dissolv’d, be a Fa-
 “ ther to the Fatherless, and ten-
 “ der, with the Love of a Mother,
 “ the Motherless.” A Heavenly
 Father is the best Father, an ever-
 lasting Father. A precious Re-
 deemer, is the best Relation. Lord
 grant me my Desires, and fulfil thy
 Promises to thy Servant, that is de-
 voted to thee. Amen.

Sure, all Advantages consider’d,
 no one Individual in the World
 hath had greater and better Birth-
 Privileges than I: O that I may
 never profanely sell my Birth-
 Right, but answer it with the
 highest Improvements.

My dear Parents took great Care
 for my holy Education, which the
 Lord prosper. At their Death,
 they committed me to the Care
 and Inspection of those, who they
 knew would not only be concern’d
 for the Welfare of my Body, but
 principally of my precious Soul.
 And thus in my Minority, was I
 left in kind and faithful Hands, and
 especially in the kindest Hands of
 my dearest Lord: O how ought I
 to

to love and respect the Memory of my dear Parents: Holy Parents deserve the best Love, and Obedience whilst Living, and the most Honourable Remembrance when dead. May I never do any thing unworthy of them. But most of all I owe my self to my dearest Redeemer. O my Soul, these Blessings Christ procur'd for me with his own Blood: Admire him and Love him, and do him all the Service thou canst in the World. O Lord, grant I may meet my Holy Parents, and Gracious and Glorify'd Friends, with Comfort in the other World, at the great Day, when I believe I shall see them again. May I be their Crown of Joy in that Day. Blessed Parents and Childreu, and Families, that meet together at last in Christ, and with Christ forever.

CHAP. II.

Of my Education.

THUS at the Desire of my now glorified Parents, and by the Providence of my Heavenly Father, my Lot was cast here at *Aulcester* in *Warwickshire*, where I am to praise God, in the midst of a Thousand Enjoyments.

This is a Place most free from the common Temptations of the World. I have here no ill Company to infect me, no ill Examples to corrupt me, no Swearers, no Cursers, no Drunkards, no Sabbath-breakers, no prophane Scoffers; None but what Pray, and are obliged to keep constant to their private Duty as well as their publick Attendances. Here are indeed the common Vanities of Youth; but few, but who seem to savour the best things; and none of my Associates, but who I hope are truly serious. The Frowardness of some, is for my Tryal and Exercise: and the Seriousness of others, for my Encouragement.

agement. O Blessed be God, that my Lot should be cast here. A good Family is a good City of Refuge.

I fell into the Hands of a most tender, loving, skilful, compassionate Master; a Father rather than a Master, whose Endeavour hath been to train me up in Learning, and in the Fear of the Lord together. One that knew patiently to bear with my puerile Infirmities: But yet faithfully corrected me for greater Miscarriages: But never in a Passion, always with Meekness and Tenderneſs: With Love convincing me of my Error, and affecting me with a Sense of my Fault. Gentle Rebukes are sovereign Medicines, and kind Correctors choice Friends. We all not only fear, but love our Master. Meer Fear is slavish, but Love and Fear are truly Generous. Good Masters are publick Blessings. Here I have sat under the powerful Dispensations of all the Ordinances of God, for above fourteen Years together, I have heard the joyful Sound; I have heard such Sermons, and such Subjects, that have been
enough

enough to awaken the most stupid, and affect the most dull ; which I am sure have had many Seals. How sweet hath the Word been to my Taste, I earnestly remember it still. May I prove one of the Seals of this Ministry. Good Ministers are some of the greatest Mercies to the World. O my Soul, bless God for such Soul Friends.

Here I have had the Privilege of Family-Worship: Thrice a Day have I heard the Word read ; and Prayers offer'd. Once a Week have I heard one or other Question in Religion examin'd and stated. Once a Week have I been catechised and instructed. Once a Week have I had an Opportunity of more publick Prayer. Twice a Week, since I have had any Capacity, I and my Companions have privately engag'd in Prayer together, and here I have met with God. Twice every Sabbath have I heard Practick Preaching, and in the Evening Repetition. These, unless any thing extraordinary hath interrupted, have been my constant Privileges for many Years. What an Account have I
to

to give, O my Soul! How shall I answer it to God, Lord help me, that my Improvements may be according to my Enjoyments. Here, O my Soul, stand and admire at the Love of God in Christ, and his Free Grace to me; that whilst Thousands perish for want of Knowledge, I should be train'd up in the School of Christ. Few in the World have had half my Privileges. Should I perish under such Enjoyments, how low should I sink in Misery. God forbid.

I came here very Young, and so had good Principles instill'd into me, before the Vanities of the World had insinuated themselves. I had a Closet to retire into, for private Devotion, and Heart Examination; I have had some of the choicest Books to Read, almost on every Subject. I have had time enough allow'd me for Soul-concerns; O that I had improv'd it as I ought. I have not wanted Encouragement, Counsels, Exhortations to what is Good, nor Restraints from what is Evil. Yea, here I have had the gracious Assistances
of

of the Spirit of God. These and a Thousand more have been my choice Privileges. Had I improved them as I ought, I might have been one of the first, one of the most eminent of Christians of my Age and Standing. Lord ! How shall I answer it ? Good Education is like a good Foundation for the best Superstructure. Millions have been ruined by bad Education. How mercifully hath the Grace of God consulted my Happiness. Happy indeed, if those of us, that have been educated together, answer our Education : O that there may not be a prophane *Esau* among all the Flock.

But this is not all the Happiness I have met with here. The Providence of God plac'd me in the Arms and Bosom of a tender Mistress, who took as much Care of me, as mine own Mother would have done. Thus when one Mother was dead, God provided me another, that I was but a little while Motherless. Had my own Parents liv'd, perhaps I had never been planted in this Family, my
own

own good Mother, as I have heard, being exceedingly indulgent, which I might foolishly have abused to my own Prejudice. O the Mysteries of Divine Goodness, even in the darkest Providences. God speaketh out of the Clouds; his very Frowns oft prove great Blessings. And because my Mistress excessively indulged me, my God foreseeing I might have misimprov'd such Kindness, was pleas'd to remove her too. Thus I lost two Mothers, but my God still cared for me. May I meet them both at last at the Right Hand of Christ. Excessive Indulgence oft proves prejudicial to poor Minors. Fond Friends are not always the best Friends: But I was not left Friendless. What turns did the Wheels of Providence take for my Advantage, I can't but admire, and say, O Wheel! O Blessed be God for his correcting Mercies. Lord help me seriously to consider the Privileges that I have had: Assist me, O my God. *Amen.*

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Of the Vanity of my Youth.

WH O in the World hath more to answer for than I? but what Account shall I give? I have reason to lament, and say, *Childhood and Youth are Vanity.* The Lord forgive me. From the Age of Three, to Twelve Years old, there was little or nothing but Vanity. I was pleas'd with every puerile Impertinence and Trifle: But Religious Exercises were without Gust and Savour. I was devoted to my Sports and Pastimes, extravagantly fond of Gaming: This was my very Element I moved in, whilst the precious Soul was shamefully neglected, and exposed. Thus I ventur'd the Loss of all, to gratify my own Humours and fleshly Inclinations. Flesh Pleasers are bold Adventures. How much precious Time did I waste in these silly Frolicks. I was a true Drudge to sensual

sual Pleasures. Night and Day contriving, forecasting, flaving at them.

Was Time no more precious? Had I taken that Pains in serving my God, as in serving the Flesh, what Joy and Comfort might I have now had! But O how afflictive are the Thoughts of these things? Sin and Satan are ill Masters. I was soon tired with that which is Good, but unwearied at my Sports. I thought I might have been excused, because Young, but Conscience will not excuse. O that the God of Conscience would forgive me.

The blackest Crime I have to charge my self with, is the horrid Sin of Lying. Which tho' but rarely committed, and to excuse my self too; yet how do the thoughts of it sting me! What a vile Wretch was I? What a young Sinner? Lies do not extenuate, but double the Fault.

I was often admonished, and seriously called upon; but I was deaf to Counsel: And tho' I sometimes smarted for it, yet my Inclinations were so strong, and violent, that I
pusht

pusht on in gratifying the Flesh. What a sinful Nature have I? How is Folly bound up in my Heart? The more Warnings, the greater the Sin.

I did not indeed live without Duty. I was not suffered, or else my own corrupt Nature would gladly have dispens'd with it. I had Books more for a Shew, than Service; I was covetous of Books, but seldom read in them. Books without Grace to use them, are a poor Library. I sometimes retired into my Closet; but what did I there? Little better I fear than waste part of my Time in Vanity. The most I can say is, I was there; O that I could say, I had been with God there.

Indeed whilst I was thus busie at Vanity, and drudging for Trifles, my Conscience often, or always checkt me, I was ashamed of my self. Sin always carries Guilt and Shame with it, whilst Duty affordeth true Peace and Satisfaction. I had often too, some gracious Motions, and Divine Influences; but the childish Humour, and brutish
Flesh

Flesh bore all down. I opposed
Conscience, I quenched the Spi-
rit, I slighted Admonitions, to ful-
fil the Desires of the Flesh, which
now costs me dear. Alas! alas!
Twelve Years of my short Life
have been wasted and lost. The
Lord forgive me.

C H A P. IV.

Of my first Acquaintance with God.

BUT God was more merciful
to me, than I was to my self.
I was Vain and Sinful, and destroy-
ing my self; but God's Grace ap-
pear'd to me. God's Grace is a
better Preserver than our own Re-
solutions. 'Tis somewhat to be born
within the Virge of the Covenant.
When I was between Twelve and
Thirteen Years old, the Grace of
God laid hold on me: It found me
trifling, but it quickly made me se-
rious: It found me Worldly, but
it quickly made me Heavenly; I
remember the time. I shall never
forget

forget the Day. The Day of our Conversion ought never to be forgot. It was on a Saturday, I think, *An. Dom. 1704.* The Day of my Espousals, and of the Gladness of my Heart.

By the Direction of my dear Master, some of greater Maturity than I retired to pray together, to help forwards one anothers Salvation; Poor I happily was in their way, but busy at my Sports. One of them, my dear Friend, the happy Instrument, asked me to go with them: And I being proud of Esteem, was ambitious to associate with them, not knowing as far as I can recollect, what their Design was. Had I known it had been for Prayer, I fear I should have chose my Diversions. But God had a great Work to do in me, and for me: how free, how rich, how wonderful is the Grace of God! Whilst they were engaged in Duty, I did little else but laugh behind the Curtain. Thus I came away, not the better, but the worse, had not the Grace of God over-ruled (O my Soul behold and admire the good

good Hand of my God upon me.)
Soon after, I overheard two or
three censuring me, for my inde-
cent Atheistick Carriage, and my
Heart instantly smote me. O see
how the Stratagems of Satan some-
times through Grace become the
Means of Salvation ! He designed
it for Evil ; but the Grace of God
over-ruled it to my everlasting Wel-
fare : Thus the good Work began,
and my Repentings were kindled
together. My Heart burned with-
in me. One of my Companions
was so faithful to me, as to reprove
me seriously, and speak to me af-
fectionately about another World ;
and the Spirit of God set in with
the kind Admonitions : Every Ex-
pression came with Power, forth-
with I resolved to set on the great
Work of Salvation. O see, my
Soul, what God can do ? *Out of the
Mouth of Babes and Sucklings he or-
daineth Strength, to still the Enemy,
and the Avenger.*

That which help'd on the good
Work, was the good Company I
had. It pleased God at this very
time to work upon the Conscien-
ces

ces of almost all our Class : We had all a very great Concern upon us, for our own, and one another's Souls, our precious and immortal Souls. We had each others Examples and Prayers to help on one another to Heaven and Glory : O how sweet was it to talk with my Companions of an everlasting State ! How much was I affected with their Discourses. Thus we walked together as Brethren, edifying one another, and drawing one another nearer and nearer to God in a Way of Duty. Good Examples are good Guides to Heaven.

What further advanc'd the good Work, was a happy Dream I had one Night as I lay on my Bed. I dreamt that I saw the Tribunal of God erected, and all brought to Bar ; and all my Companions accepted, and blessed, and carried up to the Enjoyment of God in Heaven : But I, poor miserable Wretch, was left behind. This dreadful Thought struck me with Terror and Horror : It was as if Hell begun. I soon awoke,

When my Dread hung upon me ; I continued amazed, yet blessing God I was out of Hell, resolving, with great Diligence, to set upon the Work of my eternal Salvation. O the Love of God, in guiding my Thoughts in the Night Season ! Dreams themselves, thro' the Grace of God, may be Helps to Heaven. When the Morning came, I arose, strangely surpriz'd with my present State ; I quickly fell to my Prayers, and pour'd out my Soul to God, the Lord hear every Petition. Amen.

My Affection and Zeal for Religion was soon taken notice of by my dearest Master, who took occasion to talk sweetly and heavenly to me, and to encourage me to go on with such Expressions as these : What, my dear Child, dost in good Earnest begin to look after God ? I rejoice in thee, and over thee : What ! Looking Heaven-wards. O go on, let nothing discourage, nor hinder thee : This, this is the way to thy glorified Parents. What shall I be so happy as to present thee at last to them, my Joy, and their Joy ; my Crown, and their Crown ;
and

and the Joy of God, and Christ for ever. Such Expressions soon melted down my Heart, drew Tears from me. I thank'd him, and ask'd him for some good suitable Book; he soon directed me, and supplied me, and with many Encouragements and Assurances of Acceptance with God, press'd me to go on. I remember it still. O what Blessings are good Advisers, and tender Consciences.

I now began, with great Seriousness, to think of the best Things. The Spirit of God graciously guided my Thoughts. It came powerfully into my Mind, what Wonder of Mercy I was: That whilst thousands perish'd in their Sins, the free Grace of God should lay hold on me: That I should be spar'd, and they cut down, that had not sinned against such Lights, such Mercies, and Privileges, and Warnings, as I O what a Mercy, that such a Wretch as I should be owned, who had so shamefully slighted the Grace of God! O what a Mercy, that as I added one Slight to another, God did not add

add one Judgment to another!

That my Dream did not prove a Reality; that I should be on this side Misery, who might have been condemned for ever. Still I am spared. Lord help me, that I may improve the Day of thy Patience.

I soon observ'd the malicious Designs of Satan against me. He hath a peculiar Spite against the Children of good Parents, and of pious Education. If such a one as I perish, it will be with a Witness: My Fall will be greater than that of most in the World, as my Privileges have been greater. The Fall of the Posterity of the Righteous is most scandalous and pernicious to themselves and others. I have the more need to watch, and pray, and fight valiantly the Lord's Battles, O help me. *Amen.*

This brought it warm on my Thoughts, that the Providence of God had plac'd me under happy Circumstances, and at the very Gates of Salvation, descending from gracious Parents. The God of my dear Parents is willing to be

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my

my God : He that was merciful to them, will be merciful to me, being one with them. I am one that hath the fairest Opportunity for Heaven, I bless God, my Father's God. O forsake not the Son of thy Handmaid. God hath blessed me for their sakes, even to Admiration

The Designs of the Grace of God, must be my eternal Welfare for *he delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner*, much less in the Death of one that is a Branch of a Religious Family. The present Blessings too he bestows upon Me, are great Assurances of eternal Blessings. He that is so kind now, will be eternally kind, if I am not wanting to my own Soul. If ever I perish my Damnation will lie at my own Door. There is Hope for me, and the best Encouragements. O that I may never rest in the Creature but rest upon the Creator.

I have indeed been a very provoking Wretch ; there is no room for delay ; 'tis high time for me to reform, and set upon the great Work, who have loitered and sinned away so many Years. The Spirit

te Spirit will not always strive with
be me. O now my Soul set in with
hat its Motions: God will not always
for bear with me, now then is the Time
er's to engage in the Service of my
thy God. O now let me begin, and
me close in with God, and accept him
ion for my God. *Amen.*

o Should I stifle all these Motions,
are what would be the Issue? Whom
of Mercies win not, Judgments soon
one overtake. Judgments hang over
Fa their Heads, who despise the Grace
o h of God. And it may be, those
ssu Judgments may not so much as
H alarm me, if I now harden my
ter own Heart, but only serve to har-
g to den me for eternal Judgments.

rish Wherefore I resolve instantly to
own begin, whilst it pleaseth God to
and deal with my Conscience. Bles-
tha sed be the Lord, that hath met with
ture me in the Beginning of my Days,
pro whilst others are justly left to sin
oon on to Old Age, how free is the
ne to Grace of God? Even so Father,
grea so it seemeth good in thy sight.

I fin Thus I set seriously to the main
Th Work; three times every Day I re-
Spiri quired for private Devotion, and four

times every Lord's Day : When I poured out my Soul to God in Prayer, besides Family and publick Attendances. When Holiness is real, it will shew it self in good Works.

And whilst I thus walk'd with God, I had not the least Sicknes. I felt not the least Pain : I met not with the least Trouble, as I know of, though in a troublesome World, unless this that I was a Sinner. The Lord pardon me.

And O what sweet Communion had I with God ? What Delight in Ordinances ? How sweet to think of another World, and of the Love of Christ to my Soul ? How pleasant to talk of Everlasting Happiness ? I had a Heaven upon Earth, and thus it continued for a long time. And tho' the Festivals come on, when our common Business was dismiss ; and I was called abroad to visit my Friends, my Heart in every Place was taken up about another World : No Diversions jussled out Duty ; I sought for Retirements for Prayer, and Communion with God, and God heard me. I returned to my old Post with

with the same Zeal and Life; and my growth in Knowledge, and in the Grace of God, was very visible. Thus all things went well with me, whilst I kept close to God and Duty.

CHAP. V.

Of my Decays and Apostacy.

YET notwithstanding all my Privileges, Enjoyments, Hopes, Promises, Attendances, Experiences, Encouragements, notwithstanding all these I fell: I fell foully and shamefully. Oh I fell from God and my Duty. Oh perfidious, vile, sinful Wretch! I fell from that God, from whom I had received innumerable Favours, and Mercies. Oh the Deceitfulness of Sin! The Cunning of the Enemy! The Corruption of my own Heart.

I durst not omit Duty, but I fell under a wretched Indifferency: I more rarely attended upon it, I

quickly became dull and stupid: Religious Exercises lost their Sweetness: The Word of the Lord became the Burden of the Lord. The Spirit withheld its Influences, my God withdrew from me. I was as one deserted. I went backward many degrees.

And thus the Enemy deceiv'd me, and prevail'd against me, and drew me into many Snares and Sins. I return'd to my old Vanities, and wasted many precious Hours in unbecoming Diversions, which I thought harmless, but the Reflections prove bitter. O how much Time did they devour, and somewhat of Treasure too, which might have been better imploy'd. This lead me into one more gross Mistake, to the wounding of my Conscience, which I cannot but continually lament. My Mind was strangely set upon my Pleasures, which I attended more constantly than my Duty. These stole away my Affections from my God, and my Duty: O Lord forgive me. Amen.

The Causes of my Apostacy, so far as I can recollect, were these two. It is good to search into the grounds of Apostacy, that we may for the future avoid the Occasions of Sin, and no more fall from God.

The first Stumbling-block was, the ill Example of some of my dear Companions, who tho' hopeful and serious whilst here, soon declin'd when abroad in the World. Which cast a Damp, not only upon my Spirits, but upon theirs who were left behind: Those that encouraged me to Seriousness, were the first that discourag'd me. It is one thing to be under the Influence of Religious Government, and another thing to be left to the wide World. Ill Examples, even at a distance, are vastly prejudicial. The Defection of hopeful Beginners is of the worst consequence to the Souls of others.

Many hopeful Buds have been nipt. Thus we who were Fellow-helpers of one another's Faith, became Destroyers of the same. May I ever take care of ill Company.

How easily did they prevail against me, who by the Cunning of Satan fell away by degrees?

Another Occasion of my Fall was, the Omission of one known Duty; that I wilfully absented from, and God justly withdrew. I see if I give way to one Sin, Satan will quickly draw me to another: And thus the whole Link may run on, even to my eternal Condemnation, without the preventing Grace of God. “ O Lord, O Merciful God, pardon and forgive, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

My Soul, take care, and attend upon all the Ordinances of God, least one Omission should run on to thy Eternal Damnation.

CHAP VI.

Of my Recovery.

BUT God who chose me from my Mother's Womb, had Mercy upon me; and why on me, when others of my Companions are

are hardened? Happy if this Relation prove to their Conviction.

“ O Lord, let not Convictions die.

“ O God, my God, let not Convi-

“ ctions die. *Amen.*

Praises to Restraining Grace.

What shall I now do, that I may no more prevaricate and turn aside? I will charge my Soul most earnestly, and bind my self for ever to the Lord, in a most solemn Covenant, and cast my self upon the Grace of God in Christ for ever.

And now my Soul, that God's frequent Calls, and my Refusals and Apostacies, may not provoke the Spirit to withdraw, and leave me to the Commissions of my old Sins; and thus I become a greater Sinner, and hardened for ever, and be at last condemned at God's Bar. O my Soul, I charge thee to consider.

How shall I be ever able in an unconverted Estate, to meet my glorified Father and Mother, with any Comfort in the Great Day of the Lord? And can I be content to be eternally parted from them? God forbid.

How can I bear the Wrath of God for ever ?

What for ever be excluded Heaven and Happiness, and be shut up in the Flames of Hell to all Eternity ! God forbid.

All my Acquaintance, and Religious Companions, will come in as Witnesses against me, if I prove unsincere. Oh dreadful ! Oh dreadful ! And my Master, and my God too, will implead me, before all the World. And how shall I answer their Charges ? I shall have all the Sorrows in the World upon me.

But if I faithfully serve my God, my Parents, my Master, my Companions, and all will witness for me : My Conscience, my God will be for me. All will help me, if I am faithful ; and all will be against me, if I am otherwise.

God hath promised that he will own me, if I return to him. " O my God, turn me. Now, O Lord, I come ; accept me, O Lord Jesus."

Then shall I taste of the Sweetness of Religion. I shall have Peace of Conscience, Joy in the Holy Ghost,

Ghost, Increase of Grace, and Perseverance therein unto the end. I shall be blessed in all my Studies and Labours, and in all I have. God will hear my Petitions at all times.

I shall be fat and flourishing in the House of my God.

I shall be prosperous in all I have, in all I do.

I shall have no Troubles to afflict me, but what will turn to my Advantage. I shall be deliver'd from an uncomfortable Death here, and a miserable Death for ever. Lord, help, let these things invite and draw me to thy self. *Amen.*

I am thine, Lord, I am thine.

In the Presence of the Great God, I declare this Day,

That Four times every Day, I will make my Application to him for all Things.

That whenever I am tempted, I will run to him for Succour.

That I will not suffer my self to be enthralled by any Lusts in the Service of the Devil.

That all I do shall be referr'd to the Glory of God.

That

The LIFE of

That I will never profane his Holy Sabbaths.

That I will be serious in Reading, in Praying, in Hearing, in every Duty.

I will never dare to tell a wilful Lye, &c.

O Great God, enable me by thy Grace to observe all these Things. Be pleased to pardon all my Sins, and help me by thy Grace, who am resolved to endeavour to perform all that thou enjoinest me to do. To which I put my Hand and Seal this Day.

T. B.

My Beloved is mine, and I am his.
Let this be the Motto.

And the better to confirm my Soul, I will subscribe Mr. *Allen's* Covenant, and that Covenant of Grace and Life, which my dear Master hath pen'd down for us, which is as followeth.

The

The Gospel Covenant.

I call Heaven and Earth to witness this Day,

That I renounce with Abhorrence all Idol-lovers whatsoever, and avouch the Great God of Heaven and Earth to be my Sovereign Lord and Happiness: To whom, and to whose Service, I devote myself for ever. For Sanctification, for Justification, for Consolation, for Preservation, and for Salvation.

First, I take God the Father to be my Sovereign Lord and Father, whose Interest I will espouse as mine own, and whose Will I will carefully attend, casting myself upon his rich Grace alone, through Jesus Christ my Lord.

2. I take God the Son to be my Saviour, Lord, and Mediator, my Prophet, Priest and King; to whose Government I entirely yield myself, building all my Hopes of Happiness upon his meritorious Obedience, through the saving Operations of the blessed Spirit.

3. I

3. I take God the Holy Ghost to be my Sanctifier, Guide and Comforter: To whose Conduct I submit my self, depending upon his sacred Influences, according to the Word of God.

4. I take the Word of God to be the Rule of my Faith, both of my Doctrines and Practice. I believe it to be a perfect Rule; and resolve to conform my self to it as it is receiv'd in the Church of God.

5. I take the Church of God to be my Habitation, resolving to associate with God's faithful Servants, in all the Institutions of his Grace, and to advance all I can the true Evangelical Protestant Religion in my Place and Generation.

6. I give my self to God the Father, Son and Spirit. My Soul and Body, my Name and Estate, and all that is mine, to be at his Disposal and Service: Whose I am, and whose I desire all that is mine should be.

Thus I take the Great God to be my God, my Covenant-God, and the God of mine, in Covenant for evermore, according to the Riches of

of his Grace in Jesus Christ.

And all this I do, as in the Presence of God, Angels, and Men, without Force, or Fraud, Reserve, or Revocation.

Amen and Amen. So help me,
O my God.

To which, by thy Grace, I put
my Hand and Seal.

T. B. ●

My Beloved is mine, and I am
his.

Lord God help me in renewing
this Covenant; put my Heart into
a Covenant Frame; that I may
stand to it as long as I live. Amen
and Amen.

T. B. ●

November 29. 1708. Before Men
and Angels, I protest to abide by
what I have here wrote. Lord
help me, that I may not go back;
but seriously answer my Engage-
ments. I take thee again to be my
God.

T. B.

Lord

Lord enable me to keep my Covenant with all my Heart, all the Days of my Life, that I may never turn aside to serve the Enemy more, which I resolve thro' Grace.

T. B.

Lord help me by thy Spirit to perform what thou requirest, and I have again and again covenanted to do, *Amen.*

There's need of renewing our Covenants, if we will abide with God. But renewed Bonds without Grace will never hold the deceitful Heart. This, therefore being the Seventeenth Year of my Age, *August* 20. 1709. and the Turning Day of my Life, I desire solemnly to renew my Covenant. The Lord keep me, O keep me close to thy self. *Amen.*

T. B. ●

Seal, O sweet Jesus, Seal all to my Soul, with the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, that I may be thine, and for ever thine. Thine I am, O Lord; help, O Good God:

God : Help, O my Redeemer : Help
O my God : Help, O Jesus : Help,
O blessed Spirit. Help, O God
the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Seal, O God : Seal, O Lord Jesus :
Seal, O blessed Spirit. O God the
Father, Son and Holy Ghost, ac-
cept me, I beseech thee, my Fa-
ther, my Saviour, my Sanctifier ;
for thy Name's sake, for Jesus's sake,
for the Love of the Spirit. *Amen.*
Amen, Amen.

And because 'tis now fit I should
choose some Course of Life, in
which I may serve my God, and
his Church, and my Generation,
upon mature Deliberation and
Thought, with the Counsel of my
dearest Friends, and agreeable, as
I am told, to the Designs of my
now glorified Parents ; I solemnly
make Choice of the Work of the
Ministry, to be the Work of my
Life, believing I have a Call from
God. And accordingly this Day
engage my self to God, in his pe-
culiar Service.

The

The Ministerial Covenant.

I do now in the Presence of the Great God, Angels and Men, devote my self, thro' the Assistance of his Grace, to the Service of the Great God, resolving to renounce the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; and to love, honour and obey, to submit to, and trust in my God for ever, The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And that I may in the closest and more particular Manner be separated from the World, and be serviceable to my God, and to my own and other's Souls; I am ambitious of his Grace, thro' which I may choose the great Work of the Ministry, to be the stated Business of my Life: And resolve by his Grace, to be diligent and faithful in his Work, to labour Day and Night in it, that I may be the happy Instrument of convincing Sinners, and edifying Saints, and saving Souls, and advancing the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this I do in this turning time
of

of my Life ; beseeching God that I may be found faithful, to his Glory, and to the eternal Advantage of my own poor Soul, and the Souls of many others. Help O my God, that I may abide herein to my Lives end. And when Time shall be no more, let me enjoy thee for ever.

To all which I put my Hand and Seal, in the Presence of the Great God, Angels and Men.

T. B. ●

C H A P. VII.

Of my Temptations.

BUT altho' the Grace of God hath thus happily dispos'd and determin'd my Thoughts and Heart for himself and Service ; yet I find the Busy Enemy still pursuing me, trying to unhinge and unsettle me. " Lord, come in to my Assistance." O may I never hearken to the Suggestions of the evil one.

Lord

Lord help me, let not the Enemy prevail. I know it is most unreasonable to yield, but I cannot but fear, because I find my own corrupt Nature too apt to comply with the Tempter ; without the special Help of the good Spirit of God, I may be yet overcome. God forbid. “ For the Lord Jesus Christ his Sake, help me, O my God.

The Enemy would perswade me to desist from Duty and Religion, and to take my carnal Liberty.

But shall I apostatize from so good a God, to serve such a Slave ? Answer, O my Soul ; Which is best to serve, the God of Heaven, or the God of this World ? Who will reward me best ? If I serve my God, I shall have Peace of Conscience, the Blessings of Providence, the Guidance and Comforts of the Spirit, the Enjoyment of my God, and all the Happiness that is above, for ever and ever : But if I serve the Enemy, he hath nothing to give me ; he promiseth me great things, but there’s nothing with him but Torments, everlasting

ing Torments; this is all the Reward he gives his Servants. A bad Paymaster indeed! Surely it is better being everlastingly happy than miserable. *Get thee behind me Satan.* O Lord my God, teach me, help me, that I may fly from him; that he may never be able to keep me from the Enjoyment of my Heavenly Father, and my dear Lord Jesus Christ for ever. *Amen.*

He suggests to me, That it is *Temp. I.* Time enough; you are young, and have many Years before you: What need you be so hasty?

O cunning Enemy! Dost thou *Answ.* thus tempt me? Am I not the Son of good Parents? Was I not early devoted to the Service of the Great God? Do not I owe my first Fruits to my Maker? Is not my Childhood and Youth the Lord's? By the Help of the good Spirit of God, without whom I can do nothing, I am resolv'd to serve my God, in the Prime of my Days. Can I think he will take up with the Refuse of my Life; when I have serv'd the World, the Flesh and the Devil, with my Prime? Can

Can I think he will accept of the Blind and the Lame, when I have a Lamb in the Flock? No, no: He hath said, *Remember thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth*; and why should I defer longer? I find but one Instance of late Repentance, and why should I presume? This I am sure of, if I serve my God in the Prime of my Days, I shall find Mercy; but if I defer longer, I am altogether uncertain what may be the Issue. *It is best being at Certainities, in the great Concerns of ones Soul and Eternity.* Shall I talk or think of deferring, when I know not how soon Death may be commission'd by the great God to fetch me out of this World, and bring me before his great and awful Bar? And if it should be before I am prepar'd to meet him, how dreadful will my Case be, and that for ever? Be gone, thou Enemy of my Soul, the Morning of my Age is the fittest time to begin the great Work; and it may be the only Time I may have; I will not, I am resolv'd, I will not, thro' Grace, defer one Moment.

But

But still I find the Enemy assault- *Temp. 2*
ing me. *What then will you debar*
your self of the Comforts and Pleasures
of this Life ; and expose your self to all
manner of Troubles and Reproaches and
Sufferings, which your Religion is like
to cost you ? If common Diversions
seem too mean, there are more noble and
intellectual Delights ; solace your self
with the Wit of the Age ; let Plays and
Romances be your pleasing Study.

Oh what a Deceiver is my Ene- *Answ.*
my ! What are all the Pleasures of
the World but poor and perishing ?
What are these to a rational Soul ?
How unsuitable and unmanly ?
Shall I thus waste my Time, spend
my Estate, offend my good Friends,
provoke my God, and neglect my
Soul, and all to please the Flesh ? I
will never do it. It is only some
Shew of Pleasure, I have found it
real Bitterness. My Pleasures have
cost me dear ; for these I have o-
mitted Duty, adventur'd upon Sin ;
I have indeed pleased the Flesh and
Satan, but have displeased God and
Conscience. O ! I would do so
no more. What Pleasure can I
have in those things, whereof I am
now

now ashamed. Sensual Pleasures I find a Sting to my Conscience, a Thorn in the Flesh; Torments rather than Pleasures. I have met with true and solid Comfort, and Soul-satisfying Joy in the Way of Duty and Religion; which outweigh far all its Troubles and Difficulties. There is nothing of Delight in the World comparable to what I have found in the Enjoyment of God. *One Hour's, yea one Moment's Communion with God, is far beyond the sensual Delights of a whole Life.* Shall I then leave the Sweets and the Joys of the Holy Ghost for the bitter Sweets of Sin, which are but for a Moment, and issue in everlasting Torments? Shall I lose the Love of Jesus, miss of Peace of Conscience, rob myself of the Comforts of Life and Death, and Eternity, which are the Attendants of Religion; and all for brutal Delights, that may make a Beast as happy as a Man? Far be it from me. "O dear Lord Jesus keep me, and keep up in me a Sense of thy Love, and lively Affections, and Longings after

I “ after thy self; and let me never be
a “ captivated by the poor and beg-
a- “ garly Pleasures of this Life. *Amen*
net “ and *Amen*. As for the Wit of the
nd World, I must confess it is very plea-
of sing and charming; but I find the
ut- Wisdom which is from above, is far
dif- exceeding. It is poor Satisfaction
De- that Plays and Romances afford
to me; they are delightful whilst I
oy- read them, but they afford me no so-
one lid Comfort in the Review. Lord,
is thou knowest how uneasy and tor-
f a menting it hath been to my Con-
the science; I find they dreadfully
oly harden my Heart, and unfit me
Sin, for the Service of the great God,
and and provoke the Spirit to with-
ts? draw. The Reading of one hath
nifs cost me a thousand Sighs and
my Groans, and shall I venture fur-
and ther? No, no; I have better Books
are to read; there is the ho^y Word of
and God, the blessed and everlasting
may Gospel; a *Book made in Heaven*, a
an? *Book of my dear Redeemer's making*;
dear *Book composed by the blessed Spirit*;
o up *the Book of Books*; whilst I read this,
and I meet with solid Joy and Comfort.
ings O Lord, let this be my Study,
after D “ my

“(my Delight, my Meditation
 “Day and Night. Shall the Com-
 posures of profane Wits be prefer’d
 before the Book of God? Satan,
 should I delight more in thy Books
 than in my Lord’s? Horrid bewitch-
 ery! Get thee behind me, Satan.

Temp. 3. But he doth not yet depart; he
 tells me, *Religion is not the Way to*
Preferment; be wise and consider thine
own Interest.

Ans. I know it, I know it: But it is
 the Way to everlasting Preferment.
Godliness is great Gain, the greatest
Gain, if the Love of God, if an In-
terest in Jesus, if Heaven, be so
 What Profit is it to gain a whole
 World, and expose my Soul for e-
 ver? If I have God for my God
 and Christ for my Saviour, and the
 Spirit for my Guide, and Heaven
 for my End, I am sure I shall not
 want by the Way. I have enough
 and enough for ever and ever. Sa-
 tan, say no more. I am above this
 Temptation.

Temp. 4. But he will not let me alone.
 he tells me, *You need not be so strict*
you may adventure sometimes upon small
Sins: What is a little Lye, or such
small

Small Matter, when it is for your Interest too?

Shall I call any Sin small, that *Answ.* is an Offence to my good God and dear Redeemer? Shall I adventure upon that which hath cost me so dear already? One Sin once ruin'd Mankind, and what may seem a little one too. One Stab may destroy my Life, and one Sin my Soul. One Sin may make Way for more, especially if presumptuously committed, and provoke the Grace of God to withdraw, and then where am I? Sins of Infirmary are like to be too numerous, and shall I adventure upon wilful Commissions. The least Sin deserves eternal Torments, and shall I to gratify the wicked One run such Hazard? Is a Lie nothing? I'm sure it has cost me Anguish enough. O my Soul, look back, recollect that Torment of Conscience, those Fears and Dangers, that little Sins, even a Lie have expos'd me to. How shall I answer for these at the Bar of a just God? Shall I thus drudge and slave my self to the Enemy? O horrid! I have had enough, I

have had too much of Sin. “ The
 “ Lord give me Grace that I may
 “ not touch the accursed Thing.
 Satan, be gone.

Temp. 5. But he hath other Devices. *He*
disswades me from a constant Atten-
dance upon Duty. What need you be so
strict? What need you pray so oft, and
read so much? It will weary the
Flesh, and tire the Spirits, and run up
Religion into Superstition. Be not
righteous overmuch.

Insw. And shall I dare to omit any
 known Duty! It hath cost me dear
 already, and shall I adventure a-
 gain? The Lord knows what
 Pleasure I have found in his Service:
 O how sweet hath Duty been, hath
 Prayer been to me! *I remember*
his Love more than Wine. I have
 been guilty of too many Neglects,
 and shall I make the Breach worse?
 God forbid. One Omission may
 wrong my Soul, provoke my God,
 and quench the Spirit, and let in
 the Tempter upon me. “ The
 “ Lord make me more wise, and
 “ wise for eternal Salvation, Sa-
 tan be gone; this will not, this
 shall never do.

But

But he pursues still. You may Temp. give your self Allowances at the present, and return afterwards to your Duty. You may enjoy the Comforts of both Worlds. Take a Loose, and try what good things the World hath, and then return at length, I do not dissuade you from Religion, but perswade you to taste of the Sweetness of the Creatures in your Minority, and when more ripe and fit for Religion, then to engage in it.

O cunning Enemy! Shall I de- *Answer* sist from Religion, with a Design and Purpose of returning to God again? No, I will not. How can I promise my self Grace to do this, and Acceptance with God. Shall I quench the Motions of the Spirit now, what Assurance can I have that he will ever return again? If I put off God now, may he not justly leave me to my self. When shall I return again? it will be too late when in the Grave; there I am sure will be no Room for Repentance; and whilst I give the Flesh its Liberty, Death may seize me. I may hear, who knows, *This Night shall thy Soul be required.* It will be too late to return, when

under the Seizures, and in the Clutches of the Enemy. Will he let me go. I dare not venture him, tho' it may not be impossib'le to return afterwards, it is very unlikely and exceeding dangerous. I charge thee therefore, O my Soul, not to dare to apostatize the least from God, which thou hast seen and felt the evil Effects of already. O horrid Impiety! O unreasonable Demands! What leave so good a God! What, slave for such a sworn and desperate Enemy!

By the Help of the blessed Spirit of God I will not defer one Moment. I cannot say, I have not been called in my Youth; for God's good Spirit inclines me now, and now if I engage with God, I am sure of Mercy; if I refuse, I must be inexcusable. I will not dare to sin wilfully any more, nor neglect a known Duty: I will never think of returning afterwards. These are all the Cheats of the restless and subtle Enemy. Now without Delay, I will submit to God, and seek an Interest in Christ, in his Sufferings, Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection,

urrection, and Intercession; To whom be Kingdoms, Power and Glory for ever, *Amen*.

Satan, be gone; say no more; I am resolv'd.

O that all this I have wrote and done, may not be as a Witness against me. O my Soul, be yet more concern'd; it is wisest working whilst our Day lasteth. Now's the Time, I am a poor mortal Creature, in Danger of Death.

O that I was but more fit to stand before the Bar of a just God. 'Tis time to work, Death is abroad. A dangerous Fever about; and Sickness already is broke into the Family. Lord help: Let this effectually draw me to thy self, *Amen*.

C H A P. VIII.

Of his Death.

THIS is the *Legacy* our dear Deceased Friend hath left us, which to me is far better than Silver or Gold: Because a good Evidence of his early Piety and Sincerity in this World, and his eternal Happiness in the other.

The Sicknes he speaks of in the Family, I suppose was (tho' very slightly upon others) the Fiery Chariot and Horses, that conveyed him safe home to his heavenly Father. *What is but an Infirmary to one may prove Death to another.* He wisely took the first Allarm. It is heavenly Wisdom indeed, so to number our Days, as to take the first Item of Danger, and engage our Hearts in the main Work. *Blessed is he, the Old, the Young, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing; for who knows but a very Spark may soon be blown up into a mighty, yea, an unquenchable Flame.* Of-
ten

ten the first Approaches of Death are silent and calm, when its after Seizures are more violent and pressing: And either sink us under Incapacities, or doze us with Inob-servance. Which was the Case of this Holy Youth.

His Distemper began in its lowest Degrees, and advanc'd some Days so slowly, that no Danger appear'd, which yet in about a Weeks Space confin'd him to his Chamber: Where the Body was imprison'd, but the Soul still at Liberty. All was bore with that Patience, as if it had been but the Shadow of a Distemper; and private Duty still carried on, which nothing but an utter Inability could supersede.

About three Days after his Confinement, a severe Fever Fit seiz'd him, which struck deep upon his Spirits, tho' still the Phisician apprehended no Danger, neither did he himself. It pleaseth God often to hide from Friends and Phisicians, and our selves too, the Changes his Providence is introducing. And all this in very great Mercy

D 5 too,

too, to Souls duly prepar'd for his coming. The Fears of Death are worse to the Righteous than Death it self. It is some Mercy to Die, and not feel the Sting of Death. An unseen Blow tho' Mortal is not frightful.

Nature was much spent by this severe and fiery Tryal; yet still Grace inclined to Duty. Prayer was not omitted. *It is good to live, and die praying,* After this Storm, there was some hopeful Calm, which reviv'd our sinking Hopes. But the next Day he was seiz'd with another Fit, that bore down all our Hopes, that with a strange inward Fury dry'd up his Spirits, and wasted all before it. Yet that Evening he would be led to his Bed-side, that upon his bended Knees he might once more address Heaven, tho' he could neither bow the Knee alone, nor arise without Help.

Thus he finished his stated Attendances, and betook himself to his last Bed. But tho' a Fire within wasted like a House in Flames, yet as meek as a Lamb, he made no Outcry of Danger. The

The next Morning, Death came on very visibly to all about him, tho' still imperceptible to himself. He had the free Exercise of Reason, tho' under great Dulness, the Strength of Nature being much exhausted.

I found him well satisfy'd as to the State of his Soul; not indeed lifted up with peremptory Confidence, but modestly Hoping, Repenting, Praying, Believing: *A very good Frame sure, either to live or die in.* I told him, I was afraid we should lose him. He answer'd, he hop'd not yet. So willing was he to do his Master some Services. I told him, he did not desire my Remembrances. O I do, saith he, tho' I don't speak much, be pleas'd to pray for me.

I spake to him of his Relations; he said he should be glad to see them, but was easy without. *He that hath secur'd the best Friends in Heaven, may be satisfied in the Absence of the best Relations on Earth.* His dear Grandfather was upon the Road to see him, but found a dead Child; who I doubt not hath since found

found him in a better World, having return'd and finish'd his Course, which he had fill'd up with as much private Devotion as any one Candidate for Heaven. Alas! Two Praying Friends quickly lost! And Praying Friends are some of the best Friends.

I inquired of him as to his Estate, what he was pleas'd to do, and found him desirous all should run on, without any Alteration, into his Dear Brother's Possession, whose Welfare here and for ever, he had very much at Heart.

Some of his Companions in the Evening, designing once more to retire, and unite their Prayers for him; one of them ask'd him, what he desir'd particularly they should request for him, he answer'd, *That he might be more useful*; and so he is now. For how low, and dull, and mean, are our Services, at the Footstool of Grace, in comparison of theirs that are before the Throne of Glory. Ours are Deadness, theirs are Life: Ours are Shadows, theirs are Substance: Ours are Wishes, theirs are Performances:
Ours

Ours are Earth, theirs are Heaven.

Still the precious Soul apprehended not its Removal. It is unspeakable Happiness to be beforehand with Death. There's no Danger in dying, tho' we see not the Blow given, when Soul and All is before secured in the Hands of a Redeemer.

In the closing Devotions of the Day, when the whole Family was conven'd together, as we were commending him to the Grace of God, and intreating that the triumphant Convoy might be ready to mount upon their Wings the gracious departing Soul, but with interrupted Expressions, every Eye weeping, and every Heart bleeding, being all concern'd to part with one universally beloved; whilst we were thus resigning him into the Arms of Divine Love; the over-hasty Soul took its Flight from us, just as his holy Father's did; to use the Expressions of a very worthy Person to me, *He went off with a Gale of Prayer. We lost as much in him, as could be lost in one Man.* I
may

may say the very same concerning the Holy Seed. *He went up in the Cloud of Incense. In the Loss of whom, we lost all that could be lost in one Holy Branch.*

Thus was he surpriz'd into Glory, and died as it were without dying. Death privately conquering it self. Whilst he thought himself on Earth, among his old Friends, he found himself in Heaven, among his glorified Relations, and with his most glorious Redeemer. Whilst he was thinking of better Service here, he found himself engag'd in perfect Adorations Above, and for ever.

*Oh Glorious Exchange ! Agreeable
Surprize ! Blessed Eternity !*

The Holy Seed :

O R, A

FUNERAL DISCOURSE

Occasion'd by the Death of

Mr. Thomas Beard.

Sept. 15. 1710.

PSALM xxii. xxx.

*A Seed shall serve him, it
shall be accounted to the
Lord for a Generation.*

I Am called forth this Day to
hard Service, to very hard Ser-
vice ; to preach a Funeral Ser-
mon for one of my own Family,
planted here as my own from his
In-

Infancy. I must acknowledge it
 to the Praise of the Goodness of
 God, that this is the first Life I
 have lost in near Thirty Years At-
 tendance upon the Education of
 Youth; and a very precious and
 valuable Life is lost; it is so in it
 self, and more abundantly to Me.
 A *Religious* Branch of a Religious
 Family is cut off: A gracious
 Branch of *Glorify'd* Parents is re-
 turned to the Root; of whom
 I have often thought and said,
 "When I am silenc'd in the Dust,
 "and shall speak no more in the
 "Name of the Lord, he will arise,
 "and be the Lord's Messenger,
 "and a skilful and acceptable one.
 Of whom all that knew him have
 been ready to say, *This* is the Seed
 of the Righteous, that is rising up
 to serve the Lord Jesus: But by a
 surprizing Stroke he is commanded
 home: A Seed prepar'd on Earth
 to serve his Lord in a better Place.
 Little did I think of doing this Ser-
 vice for him, of whom I might ra-
 ther have expected it; but we only
 guess like poor fallible Men. Alas!
 our hopes are cut off, they are gone
 down

down to the Bars of the Pit (as Job speaketh) they rest together in the Dust. But it is still a Seed to serve the Lord, tho' not in this Generation, yet in a more glorious Station.

A Seed shall serve him.

This is an *Evangelick* Psalm, as is manifest by several Passages in it : Wherein we have an Account of the Sufferings of Christ, and the Glorious Issue and Effect thereof ; that he shall have a Seed to serve him, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall be converted to him. The *Evangelick* Psalmist speaks of the *Jews*, and their Seed : *Praise him all the Seed of* Ver. 23. *Jacob, and fear him all the Seed of Israel.* You and Yours submit to the *Messiah*. He speaks also of the *Gentile* Believers, and their Seed : *All the Ends of the Earth shall re-* Ver. 27. *member and turn unto the Lord, and and all the Kindreds of the Nations shall worship before thee. &c.* and then adds, *A Seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation ; i. e.* The Lord Jesus Christ shall have a Seed that shall serve him, and this Seed shall be mostly rais'd

rais'd out of *Religious Gentile Families*, and continued in all Generations, which are the Doctrinal Truths of this Verse: The Subjects of Christ's Kingdom are chiefly the Gentile-Believers and their Posterity. Their Work and Duty is to serve the Lord Jesus; their Honour and Happiness is, that they are designed to be the Instruments of transmitting Religion to the Generations to come.

Here then we must consider,

I. *That the Lord Jesus Christ shall have a Seed.*

II. *That this Seed shall serve him.*

III. *That this Seed that shall serve the Lord, shall be raised mostly from the Posterity of Gentile Believers.*

IV. *That there shall be a Succession of such Seed in all Generations.*

I. *Gen.* The Lord Jesus Christ hath had in all Ages, and shall have a Seed. This is a very comfortable Truth, the Gates of Hell cannot prevail; if some are cut off from the Land of the Living, others shall arise to serve the Lord Jesus.

Jesus. *Of Zion it shall be said, this* Psal. 87. 5. *and that Man was born in her. All Ages shall produce some serious holy believers, and the Highest himself shall establish her, the Almighty will secure a gracious Succession. For,*

1. The Father hath promised, and given to the Son a Seed to serve him. He came into the World with this Assurance from infinite Truth and Love, *That he should see his Seed,* Isa. 53. 11. *the Travail of his Soul, and be satisfied, and divide the Spoil with the Strong.* This was the Original Contract betwixt the Father and the Son, upon his undertaking the great and glorious Work of Redemption. "My dear Son, if thou wilt interpose, and make up the Breach between me and the poor Sinner, by pouring out thy Soul unto Death. Believe me, thou shalt not lose thy Labour; I give thee, I promise thee a Seed to full Content; I give thee my Divine Word and Assurance for it: Some thou shalt be certain of as a Seed to serve thee in all Ages to the End of the World.

A

A Blessed Covenant! An Elect Seed! Eternally happy Souls that are of this number.

The Father of Mercies will never deceive his dear Son; he is faithful, and will exactly fulfil his Promise. The Lord Jesus Christ so prizeth the Father's Gift, that he will not lose any Part of it. He speaks of this with great Admiration: *Behold, I and the Children that God hath given me!* Amazing Grace! That amidst the fiery Opposition that is made to Christ, and the Christian Religion, any should be born to him; but the Pleasure of the Lord, which is the Pleasure of his Soul, shall prosper in his Hands. With what Delight hath he express'd himself: *All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out; q. d. I am perswaded that my Father will raise me a Seed, as he hath assured me: And I am resolved with the greatest Concern to regard and preserve my Father's Gift. By no means in the World shall they be neglected. For indeed,*

2. The Son himself hath dearly purchased a Seed to serve him. He travail'd with Death to bring forth a Christian Seed : What Pangs and Throws, and Agonies, did he undergo to bring forth living Children ? The Father hath given his dear Son a Seed, but he must first redeem them to himself from the Grave and Hell : He must rescue them out of the Hand of the Devourer, which he hath effected by a mighty and bloody Victory over all the Powers of Darknes. Having accomplish'd this, he is gone to Heaven to make his Claim, which we find he began on Earth. " Righteous Father, fulfil now thy Promise to thine own dear Son, who hath finish'd my Work. I now with Submission demand a Seed on Earth to serve me ; and 'tis my Will they should see my Glory too : Holy Father, I commend them all to thine infinite Grace. John 17.

3. The Father and Son have put it into the Hands of the blessed Spirit, to prepare this Seed ; and whilst an Infinite and Almighty Spirit hath

hath the Management, the Seed cannot fail. Satan cannot hinder it, he must *fall as Lightning* before him. He will easily *divide a Portion with the Strong*, for who can resist an Infinite Deity. The Work is not left to the lubricious corrupt Will of Man, nor to the Weakness of Ministers; 'tis put into better Hands, into the Hands of the Son and the Spirit: "Son, look to thy
 "Seed thy self, and let the eternal
 "Spirit serve under thee. Thus their Names are wrote in the *Lamb's Book of Life before the Foundation of the World*. Thus the Holy Seed is secured, being the Gift and Charge of the Father; the Purchase and Charge of the Son; the Work and Charge of the Spirit.

This is the Seed.

II. *Gen.* This Seed shall serve the Lord Jesus Christ; they are promis'd, purchas'd, rais'd, design'd, and prepar'd for this Service. To serve Christ, is to attend on him in the Solemnities of his Worship, and to advance his Glory and Interest in our several Places and Relations,
 and

and all from sanctify'd Principles. The great Springs of Devotion are active Love, filial Fear, Faith unfeigned, and a firm Reliance on the Grace of Christ; *Amor meus pondus meum*, &c. By these the chosen Seed are mov'd in their Sphere of Duty. I shall therefore consider, in their Scriptural and essential Characters, their gracious Constitution, and then their spiritual Operations in their full Extent and Scope.

1. The Characters of the Chosen Seed we meet with in Scripture, are such as these; They are a *holy, godly Seed, a good, right, Christian Seed*, and a *praying chosen Seed*; Very glorious *Titles*, and gracious *Characters*.

They are called the *holy Seed*: Isa. 6. 13. A very Divine Character. Holy they should be, as their Lord is holy; their Hearts, their Lives, their Duties, their Relations holy. All holy, holy in all manner of Conversation and Godliness. This Holy Seed is the *Substance* of the Church of God. As the Sap and Spirits are the very Life of the Tree,

Tree, hence it springs and flourisheth, hence is its Growth and Continuance. When it fails, it withers and dies. Thus are their *Children* *holy*.

1 Cor. 7.
14.

2. They are called the *good Seed*. A very sweet and pleasant Name. A Seed free from prevailing Corruptions, fit for Production and Increase, for present and for future Supply; the very Hope of a full Crop and plentiful Harvest. The chosen Seed should be of a very *tender* and *merciful* Disposition, whose Ambition and Aim should be to *be good* and *do good*, and thus transmit Goodness yet *further* with good Increase.

Mal. 2. 15.

They are called the *Godly Seed*. A Noble, Excellent, Godlike Seed, of God and for God, raised by the Power of God, to promote Godliness, and to continue a godly Seed in the World, whose Care must be to live to God, and to die to God, that whether living or dying, they may be the Lord's, and leave behind them not a spurious, but a godly Posterity.

They

They are called a *Right Seed*, Jer. 2. 21 wholly a right Seed, upright in themselves, and prepared for the Propagation of an upright Generation. Their Hearts right and their Services so. No Cheats nor Pretenders: *Israelites indeed, in whom there is no Guile*; noble Plants, that give a fair Prospect of a Holy Posterity: Tho' too many prov'd degenerate ones, who instead of propagating Religion, propagated Vice, and Immorality, and Idolatry: Ten thousand Pities!

They are represented as a *Christian Seed*, the Likeness of their Lord, as Children the Likeness of their Parents; Partakers of the Nature and Temper of the holy Jesus, and conformed to his holy Life. These are the Children of the Kingdom, the Gospel Kingdom, designed for Promoters and Propagators of it.

They are represented as a *Praying Seed*. Prayer is the natural Language of the spiritual Seed. *Abba, Father*, are the first Words they learn to speak. *This is the Generation of them that seek thee.* And the

Seed of *Jacob* shall not seek in vain.
 1 Pet. 2. 9. *Lastly, A Chosen Seed* ; chosen of
 God, as *Jacob* of old, *the Children*
of Jacob his chosen ; chosen through
 Grace to serve the Lord, and to
 propagate a Seed to serve him.

2. Which Seed is called forth to
 serve the Lord *Jesus* in their pri-
 vate Capacities, in their Genera-
 tion, in the Church of God, and
 some in the Ministry. This is the
 Sphere in which they are appoint-
 ed to move. Their Service begins,

1. *In their private Capacities.* This
 implies personal Devotion, and a
 truly Christian Conversation. 'Tis
 never right till the way to our Clo-
 sets is as a beaten Road, and our
 daily Walk. 'Tis never right till
 it may be said of our Houses, the
 Church of God in their House.
 And how much will a regular Life,
 that is a Transcript of Christ's own,
 adorn a Religious Closet and Fa-
 mily ? Whereas a looser Conver-
 sation belies all the personal De-
 votion.

The Holy Seed are appointed to
 maintain personal, in order to Fa-
 mily Religion ; without the for-
 mer,

mer, the latter must necessarily drop, and both in order to support it.

2. *In their Generation.* Which implies their fixing in some lawful Calling, and advancing the Interest of Christ, whatever in them lies, in the World. We may serve Christ in any lawful Calling, if we are prudent, careful, and holy therein; and some such Calling all should apply themselves to, and abide therein, according to the Advice of the Apostle. Where 'tis for ever determined, that the Christian Religion doth not dispense with an idle unprofitable Life, which must be a Disparagement to Religion it self; but commands a constant Attendance in some honest Vocation, wherein we must labour to advance the Truth, and Power, and Glory of Christianity, serving God and our Generation. Thus should the Holy Seed arise and build. As the Prophet predicts, *Those that come of Jacob should take root, and blossom and bud, and fill the Face of the Earth with Fruit.* To promote this it is necessary to fix themselves,

1 Cor. 7.
20.

Isa. 27. 6.

3. *In the Church of God.* By a constant Attendance upon all the Ordinances there, and incorporating themselves as Members with some Religious Society. Our Saviour hath given us his Example, and the Spirit of God hath given us an Account of the Primitive Converts; that they were added to the Church, and continued in Prayer together, and in other Gospel Ordinances. Thus the Philosopher directs, *μαλιστα μετὰ τον πόλιν :* Publick Attendances are the chiefest. These mostly resemble Heaven, that *General Assembly* : These most promote the Honour of God, and the Interest of Religion in the World : Christ is glorify'd, when his Word is carefully heard, when his Sabbaths are religiously observed, when his Sacraments are duly and constantly attended, and the solemn Assembly frequented. The Lord Jesus Christ is slighted when his Institutions are slighted ; he is opposed when his Ordinances are opposed. The Glory the Father expects through Christ, according to the Apostle, is from, and in the Church.

This

This is foretold concerning the Holy Seed, *That from one Sabbath to another they shall come and worship before the Lord in his holy Mount, i. e. in a fixed stated manner shall bring their Offerings unto the Lord in a clean Vessel.* Thus all Governments are maintain'd and promoted by fixed Societies. The very Nature of the thing requires this of the chosen Seed, as they desire to plant the Gospel, and propagate a Gospel Religion. Hence 'tis necessary that some of the hopeful and godly Seed should serve the Lord Jesus.

4. *In the Ministry.* For what Society can subsist without stated Officers? It would be a strange Family without a Head; a strange Government without a Governor; a strange Kingdom and no Ruler; a strange Flock and no Shepherd. God hath appointed his Officers out of the Promised Seed. This was foretold, *Isa 61.*

5. *The Gentile Strangers shall feed their Flocks, and the Sons of the Alien shall be their Plowmen and Vinedressers;* which is explained, Chap. 66. 21. *I will take of them for Priests and for Levites,*

saith the Lord. To serve God in the Ministry is the highest and hardest Piece of Service. It is to be *Embassadors of Christ*, and *Fellow-labourers* with Angels, to be *Stars* in the Right Hand of Christ: This is great Honour, but it requires double Service, that of private Christians, and that of publick Officers, who of all are most exposed to Apostate Spirits, and the Scorn of sinful Men: But the double Honour of this, and the eternal World swallow up all the Difficulties and Troubles of the Ministry.

This is the Work of the chosen Seed.

III. *Gen.* This Seed is designed to be chiefly and mainly rais'd out of the Posterity of the Righteous. This is very comfortable, and must be a very pleasing Doctrine to Religious Parents, who have most at Heart the spiritual Welfare and eternal Happiness of theirs; to be Instruments of raising up a Seed for Christ, and to prepare a Seed for Heaven, is high Honour now, and will be a Crown of Glory at last. Happy, happy Parents, whose Families

milies are Christ's, and whose Children are God's own, *Whose Seed shall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation.*

1. This is the more general Interpretation of the Text, and that of the most Learned Expositors. *Posteritas Credentium eorum Posterit*: Their Seed shall serve him; and this seems the most natural Sense of the Words. The Psalmist in the precedent Verses is speaking of Gentile Believers, and adds, a *Seed* shall serve him. If it be demanded what Seed? Whose Seed? The direct Answer is, the Seed of the Gentile Believers, of whom he was speaking, as he was of the Jews, and their Seed; *q. d.* "The Jews and their Ver. 13.
"Seed called and chosen of God
"for a Generation above all People to bear the Name of God, I
"foresee will fail thro' their Un- Deut. 10
"belief: But the Messiah shall not 25.
"want a Seed; for in the room of
"the Jews and their Seed, the
"Gentiles shall arise, and their
"Seed, who shall be accounted to
"the Lord for a Generation. Out
"of these God will raise his Church
"mostly. E 4 2. This

2. This Interpretation suits exactly with other Scripture Promises. *One Text of Scripture best explains another.* In many other Places where the Seed is spoke of, that shall arise and serve the Lord, 'tis plainly meant of the Seed of the Gentile Believers. This therefore according to the Analogy of Faith, seems the most genuine Sense of the Psalmist. I shall quote a few Places both in the Old and New Testament, which give Light to this Text. 'Tis said,
2. 65. 23. speaking of the Gentiles, *They are the Seed of the Blessed of the Lord, and their Offspring with them, i. e. their Children.* Blessed Parents and
2. 44. 3. Blessed Children! *I will pour my Spirit on thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thy Offspring,* q. d. "If you believe in my Son, You and your Offspring shall be my Holy People. *This is the Seed the Lord hath blessed.* It was foretold in the Old Testament, as an Encouragement to the Gentiles to believe in the Messiah, that God would make with
2. 55. 3. them *an everlasting Covenant, even the sure Mercies of David.* q. d. As sure

sure as *David* and his Seed had the Throne of *Israel* ascertained to them, from Generation to Generation, unless by their wilful Apostacy from God, they cut off the Entail: So certainly would a gracious God own the Believing Gentiles, as well as Jews, and their Seed for ever; unless by their Unbelief they prevented themselves. All which seems confirm'd, *The Promise* Acts 2. 38 *is to you and your Children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call, i. e. to the Gentiles equally as to the Jews. Abraham's natural Seed, and Abraham's Spiritual Seed, are both to be accounted to the Lord for a Generation. The Golden Line of Grace shall run on. As the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: So the God of Gospel Believers, and their Seed and Seed's Seed.*

3. This Explication suits with the Dispensations of the Grace of God in all Ages: The Seed of the Righteous have been the Seed of the Church, in the Time of *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham* and the *Jews*. And the Gentile Believers are frequently express'd by the Names of *Israel*

and *Jacob*, therefore as the Jewish, so the Gospel Church must be mostly maintain'd by Believer's Posterity.

4. This Interpretation agrees exactly with that Representation of the Church of God we have in Scripture. It is called a Kingdom, a Family, now 'tis the Children in both that are the main Supports of both: These are the Hopes of Kingdoms and Families; thus they are propagated; if these fail, Kingdoms and Families must quickly fail too. The Gentile Believers
 1 Pet. 2. 9. are call'd *a chosen Generation, and a holy Nation*, as the Jews were, whose Children were the Support of their Nation, and the propagatory Seed of the Church.

5. And to conclude, The Experience of all Christians clearly evidenceth this Truth. Pray, how is the Church of God mostly maintain'd; is it not raised out of Religious Families? Tell me how it hath been in your Days? The Dispensations of Grace in the Church of God, are good Interpreters of the Promises of Grace
 made

made to the Church of God. *The Operations of Grace are answerable to the Promises of Grace.* Must not that be the meaning of the Promise, which is the daily Work of the Spirit of God? If the Church of God be generally maintain'd by the Offspring of Believers, it must be their Offspring that is intended in those Promises, that speak of a Seed to serve the Lord.

Neither is there any thing objected against this Doctrine as I know of, which is of any great Force.

Whereas it may be said, *That ma- Obj. 1.*
ny of the Children of good Parents prove loose and profligate. It must be own'd it is no strange thing for an *Esau* to sell his *Birthright*. There are too too many degenerate Plants: This is a very sorrowful Truth, and what is most shameful; it is ten thousand Pities it should be so; And I must pronounce *Woe to the Apostates in religious Families.* It will be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the Children of Infidels in the Day of Judgment, than for such. *The Children of the Kingdom* that are degenerate will be sentenc'd

sentenc'd to *Outward Darknefs*. But this hinders not that the Church of God is mostly raised out of the Posterity of the Righteous. What if some Children prove undutiful, and are disinherited; prove prodigal and wast their Inheritance, doth it hence follow, that Children are not the Props and Supports of Families? What if some Subjects are rebellious, and forfeit their Birth-right, and are banish'd their Native Country, doth it follow that Kingdoms are not generally maintain'd by the free born Seed? And do not even adult Professors very often apostatize? and yet the Church of God is supported by the Professors of it.

Obj. 2. And whereas it may be said, That this Doctrine of peculiar Grace to the Posterity of the Righteous, *exposeth the greater Part of the World to Ruin*. This is a very unjust Inference. It hath been already said, That when the Free Grace of God lays hold on alien Families; they and theirs are accounted for a Generation; though mostly the Church of God is promoted by the Posterity

Posterity of the Righteous. And that others are not added, who is in the Fault? when they have the Liberty, and free Offer to incorporate themselves and theirs in this happy Society, this holy Family and Kingdom. Is there any other Government in the World so free, to offer a general Naturalization to all, upon their Submission to the known Laws thereof? The Gospel contains an universal Invitation, and assures of an universal Welcome to all who by Faith unite with the Church of God, tho' there is somewhat peculiar propos'd to believing Families, who have the first Offers of Grace, whose Lot is cast at the very Gates of Salvation: And yet as the *Jews* did, they too often put Salvation from them.

What therefore hath been pleaded for, remains a well-grounded Truth.

That the Father hath promised the Son a Seed to serve him; that the Lord Jesus Christ hath died and purchased this Seed; that the Advancement thereof is intrusted in the Hands of the Blessed Spirit; which

which Seed, according to promise, is to be rais'd mostly out of the Posterity of the Righteous; and not by a new Accession of alien Families: But yet when the free Grace of God lays hold on any of these, they and theirs shall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation. And the Defection of some of the Holy Seed, can no ways contradict this Doctrine, which allows them the first Offers of Grace, and asserts that thus ordinarily the Church of God is maintain'd.

IV. *Gen.* And thus lastly, The Church of God shall be maintain'd in all Generations. Not for a few Years or Ages, but to the very end of Time. The Seed that is design'd for the Service of Christ, and given to him of the Father, is to be gather'd out of all Ages. As appears from the sacred Records, as, *Instead of thy Fathers shall be thy Children*, i. e. Instead of Fathers which are thine, shall be their Children which shall be thine too. And thus I will make thy Name to be remembred in all Generations. There's a glorious Prophecy in *I-saiah*,

al. 45.
5, 17.

saiah, As for me, this is my Covenant, a Gracious Evangelical Covenant. *My Spirit which is upon thee, and my Words that I have put in thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed's Seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* A Promise worthy to be wrote on every Heart, and to be the Motto of every Religious Family. Let the Seed, and the Seed's Seed, learn it perfectly. Let Ministers, Parents and Children, study this mighty Word of Grace. The Lord Jesus Christ shall have a Seed in all Ages. This was the Original Covenant. Thus 'twas settled by the Father and the Son.

And indeed,

1. The Lord Jesus is worthy of a Seed in all Ages. It would be too little Glory to have his Seed confin'd to one or a few Ages. He deserves an Eternity of Service, and surely then that of Time. If all in every Age were true to Christ, it would be beneath his Merits. The least that can be thought of is
some

some in every Age; that when one Generation goes off, another may arise to serve him. And there shall not be one Age to the End of Time, so dark, so virulent, that the Glory of Christ shall be altogether eclipsed. *Christ hath redeemed to*
 ev. 5. 9. *God by his Blood, out of every Tongue and People, and Nation, those that should ascribe Blessing and Honour, and Glory, and Power to the Lamb for ever and ever, for he is worthy, &c.*

2. Such a continued Succession of a Seed to serve Christ, tends mostly to the Glory of Divine Wisdom and Grace. All Ages need a Saviour; all Ages therefore shall have the Offer, and whilst there's a Certainty of some good Effect, 'tis more honourably offer'd to all. It would be below the Majesty, and Wisdom, and Grace of God, by stated Officers, to publish the Overture of Mercy to the World, if all would be certainly ineffectual. Were there not some to be gather'd out of every Age, there would want some to balance the World, even a Blessing in it, for whose sake it should not be destroy'd.

stroy'd. But for the sake of these the wicked World is honourably spared, and Judgments superseded, without which Divine Justice would quickly proceed to Execution. For the Elect sake Judgments are overruled, and the Day of Judgment defer'd, and the Patience of God appears in Glory; but when all these shall be gather'd in from one End of the World to the other, then Judgment commenceth, and till then every Age will afford a Seed to serve our Lord, which shall be accounted unto him for a Generation.

Matth. 24. 31.

From what hath been said, we may infer,

I. That *the Lord Jesus Christ is God.* He that is to be served in all Generations, and hath a holy Seed appointed on purpose for Religious Service and Adoration; to whom Princes themselves must pay Homage, must needs be God. Yea, Angels too must Worship him, and all must honour him as they honour the Father. As no Creature is, so the human Nature of Christ cannot be adorable, and therefore he

he must have a Divine Nature. The Godhead is in it self adorable, and the Person of the Son, by reason of his Divine Nature is adorable, yea, the Divine Person of the Son, in our Nature too is adorable. *Worship him all ye Angels.* Let the chosen Seed serve him.

II. That *the Election the Gospel speaks of, is not meerly of Qualifications, but of Persons.* 'Tis true God hath chose Faith in Christ, as the necessary Qualification in all those he will own, and save for ever and ever. But he hath likewise chose some whom he will thus accomplish for his Service and Glory, *As he hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in Love.* He doth not only in Time choose some of the number of Sinners, but there is a Seed promis'd and given to Christ, before the World, to be prepar'd to serve him. The Lord Jesus Christ was at certainty as to a Seed; and the whole Effect of Redemption was not left to turn upon the lubricous, fallacious and corrupt Will of Man. There was

Eph. i. 4.

a certain Seed chose to be qualified according to the Gospel, and not merely because God did foresee they would be thus qualified. This is that *Number of the Elect* which God will shortly accomplish.

III. Hence it follows further, that *Religion hath its peculiar Excellencies and Encouragements*. 'Tis strange that Religion should fall under Disreputation, which entails so many Blessings upon Posterity, to the utmost Date thereof. Is there any Government in the World, that secures to the Seed of its Favourites a Perpetuity, nay an Eternity of Blessings? Estates, and Honours, that Men venture their Names, their Lives and Souls to engross, are attended with Thousands of Uncertainties; whilst Religion fixeth such an Entail of Mercy, that nothing but the Profligateness of Posterity can reverse. A Gracious God gives you leave to put your own Names, and the Names of yours, in a Lease of Grace, in which the Blessings of Time and Eternity are well settled, as an everlasting Inheritance from
Gene-

Generation to Generation. Who would refuse such an Offer? If the World should propose any Thing like it, what Strife would there be for the Preferment? O let Religion be your Business, which is most excellent in it self, and entails Blessings to the last Duration of it. If you love your selves, or regard Posterity, take heed to your selves and yours. Which teacheth us further,

IV. That *the Work and Duty of religious Parents and Ministers is very great.* They are to take Care of the Holy Seed that is designed for the Service of our dear Lord Jesus, to feed the Lambs. It is a great Trust that is committed to their Charge: *The Souls* of Children, and what more valuable? Your own Children, and what more dear to you? Those that are the Support of your own Families and the Church of God too; and what greater Concern can there be? Your own Welfare and theirs, the Prosperity of your Families, and the Church's too, depends very much upon your Care. It is very much in your
Power

Power to make your selves and them, and all happy. The chief Concern indeed is put into better hands, those of the blessed Spirit; but your Subserviency is required. Be ye *Workers* together with him.

You profess Love to the Lord Jesus; shew it by your espousing his Cause, and promoting his Interest, in preparing a Seed to serve him. It is for your selves, it is for your dear Lord Jesus. Let me beseech you, for the Love of Christ, to be observant and faithful

Herein you will be publickly useful, serviceable to the present and future Generations, as far as the Holy Seed shall be propagated. It may be to Thousands and ten Thousands; these may arise and call you blessed.

All good Men are concerned about a Protestant Succession in the Nation, and worthy it is of the Labours and Thoughts of all, and that not only for their own sakes, but for the sakes of their poor Children: Is not a Concern too about a religious Succession in your own Families highly becoming you, that

a Holy Family-Seed may be rais'd suitable to a National Protestant Succession? Evidence that your Concern for the Publick is sincere, by your Concern for those of your own House.

What an Honour is put upon you, to be the Instruments of raising and propagating a Seed to the Lord Jesus? And what an Honour will it be in the Great Day of the Lord, to stand as a publick Head to a glorious holy Progeny. By no means neglect your Honour and theirs.

What if any should miscarry through your Neglect? Is not the thought of it terrible, that a Branch in your Families should be corrupted, and through you too? And the Loss of one may prove the Loss of Hundreds. Thus Irreligion may be propagated, and Multitudes lost thro' your default.

These either prove the best or worst of Men, the greatest Blessings or the greatest Curses. If not an Eminent Seed for Christ, they usually prove a Notorious Seed for Satan; either Props and Pillars of
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Religious Families, or Underminers of them: For when left of God, they commonly become the most violent Opposers of Religion, and the greatest Enemies to Christ. So much the greater Care ought to be had of them.

And lastly, When was there an Age in which the Seed was more exposed? The World lies in Wickedness. How have Atheism, Profaneness, and Immorality o'er run it? There are Swarms every where of Men of most corrupt Principles and Practices. And how many already are turned after Satan! How many Religious Families are either become Formalists or Debauch'd; yea, where's the professing Family that hath not an *Esau* in it? Is it not Time to concern your selves?

Wherefore let me intreat you as Fathers, to take Care of the great Charge that is put into your Hands, as you will answer it to your Dear Lord. Be early in a Religious Dedication of them to God, in the most solemn Manner devote them to the Service of the Father, Son, and

and Spirit. Bring your *Samuels* to God, and leave them with him. God hath put them into your Hands, they are one with you. You are clothed with Power and Authority from God to transact their Concerns in their Minority. What can you do less for their Souls, than in the most serious Manner to devote them to God. Let them be cast upon the Lord from the Womb. Don't dare to think, or say, you will leave them to the Grace of God to work on them: You may as well say, you will leave them to the Providence of God to maintain them, and so expose Soul and Body together. And how will you approve your selves sincere with God in your Covenanting with him, if you leave out so considerable a Part of what is your own; your Children and all must be devoted to God, *the only way to save all, is to leave all with God.*

And then improve an early Dedication by repeated Cries and renewed Resignations of them to God. *As oft as you renew your Cove-*
nants,

bants, remember the poor Seed. As they are capable, let them have suitable and Religious Instructions. See that they are well principled, which will be a mighty Antidote against common Infections. Take particular heed of running them into Temptations, out of a vain Ambition of their Preferment. 'Tis a fearful Truth, the most that miscarry, miscarry thro' the Neglect of these Duties.

V. We may hence learn the Duty of the Children of good Parents. *Your Work is to keep up Religion in your Families, in your Generation, and to transmit it yet farther to the Ages to come.* Arise and be doing, and the Lord be with you. I intreat you, I charge you, prepare your selves for Service, and be active in it. I would thus argue with you.

Whom will you serve, if not the Lord Jesus? Is there a better Master? Can you make a better Choice, than what hath been made for you? Doth he not deserve your best Services, that left his Throne, and pour'd out his Soul to Death for you, and hath call'd you
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with an high and honourable Calling, hath Chosen you as a Seed to serve him? O leave not his Service for the Drudgery of this World, and the God of it: You will dearly repent it, if you do.

Is not your Lot fallen happily, who are born in Religious Families? What a glorious Priviledge is it to be the Children of good Parents, the Children of many Prayers, the Children of Religious Education, and the best Instructions? You are born at the very Gates of Heaven, will you arise to cancel an early Dedication to God? Will you arise to cross the Prayers of your Parents, and contradict what they have done for you, in the most tender Love to your Souls? will you try to overturn the Promises, and oppose the Work of a Redeemer? Take heed what you do, as you are born among the Stars, your Fall will be the more dreadful.

Have not you been devoted to God? Can you, dare you go back? At your Peril be it. Can you without Sacrilege alienate yourselves from the Service of God? And

And is that a trifling Crime? How will you answer it to God, and your good Parents in the Great Day? Is there not great Dependence upon your Well-doing? The Hopes of Parents, the Expectations of Ministers, nay of God and Christ, are from you. If you prove faulty, how many Expectations will be cut off? Don't dare to impose on God and Man.

The Prosperity of *Zion* in some measure depends upon your Holiness and Zeal. A Breach is made in her Walls, a Gate thrown open to the Enemy upon the Revolt of the Posterity of the Righteous. A considerable Post is delivered up, and what may be the Consequence? One Revolt and Deficiency may occasion more, and where may it end? and all will be chargeable upon you.

You are the Terror of Enemies, as well as the Hope of Friends. Satan fears you most, he employs his Agents in the first place to corrupt you.

Hereby he strikes at the very Foundation. Your Negligence and

Carnality will gratify the Enemy most, and put an Opportunity in his hands of advancing his desperate and bloody Designs against the Interest of Christ and Souls in the World. And is it nothing to join in with Satan against the Great God and your dear Redeemer? It will be found dreadful Work at last.

Is not there need of your Service? Many are revolted, some are cut off by Death. 'Tis alas! *a Day of small things*. Is it not time for you to put to your helping Hand? The Enemy advanceth, Religion is under a visible Eclipse, and a sensible Decay. Come, come, arise and build, and have the Honour of being *Repairers of Breaches, and Restorers of Paths to dwell in*.

I am forc'd to speak feelingly to some of you. Death hath fetch'd one from among you. There's one slain on the Right Hand, and on the left; One Beloved and Valued; one Serious and Hopeful. A wide Breach is made; who ariseth to fill it up? You are left behind:
Of

Of all Loves I intreat you, with all Authority I command you to arise and work. The Funeral might have been your own. What are you left behind for? You have your own Room, and another's to fill up. O strive who shall be first in their Preparations, and greatest in their Service. Fain would I raise this Ambition in you.

Are you sure of many Years? Your time of Service may be but short. Begin now; lose not one Day; the same Messenger that hath fetch'd your Friend and Companion, may quickly be order'd for you. Let me mind you of what the Philosopher said to one that ask'd him what he was a doing? He answer'd, *Paulatim morior*, I am a dying continually. You cannot think sure, because of the Briskness of Youth, you are safe from Death, when one among your selves hath so lately, in a few Days, been wrested out of your Arms and Embraces. You are dying, 'tis time to work.

Have not some of you felt the Powers of the World to come? I am perswaded you have been often under the awakening Convictions of the Spirit of God. Do I press you to any thing that your own Consciences and the Spirit of God have not been engaging you to; have you not tasted that the Lord is gracious? Take heed of *beginning in the Spirit, and ending in the Flesh.* 'Tis better you had never known the Ways of God, than that you should wickedly depart from him.

And to conclude, If this will not move you; know that if you revolt, God will call in others; his Son shall have a Seed to serve him. When the Jews apostatiz'd, the Gentiles were call'd in; and when one professing Family fails, the Grace of God will raise another. Can you be content that others should arise and build upon your Ruin? Are you willing to resign up your Glory to Strangers? O! *Let not another take your Crown.* I would hope better things of you, tho' I thus speak, even what accompanies Salvation.

And

And last of all, we may infer, that *The Loss of the Holy Seed is a very sore, and dreadful, and general Loss*; especially when capacitated, and growing ripe for Service. This is a very complicated Loss: A Loss as universal as the Service which was expected.

Which brings me to take a sorrowful View of our own great Loss we lament this Day: A Family-Loss: A School Loss: The Church's Loss: The Nation's Loss: A Generation's Loss: The Ministry's Loss.

Which will appear, if we consider, that the Deceased, besides his natural and acquir'd Capacities, which were none of the least, was in some extraordinary manner qualified for that Service: If we regard,

1. *His Temper*; which was mild and calm; even and tender; kind and compassionate. Tho' he hath liv'd with me twice seven Years, I cannot recollect that I ever saw him in a Passion. His Carriage was so obliging and inoffensive, that all that knew him lov'd him.

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A very rare Character. He was so prudent and cautious, and so far from Art and Guile, that I may say, Whom did he ever offend by an intermeddling Humor? And as he liv'd, so he died, in a perfect Calm. Now what a great Ornament is so good a Temper to Religion? What a necessary Qualification to the Ministry? Of all Men, Ministers have most need of such an one. *How bright doth Grace shine in a good Disposition?* even like the Sun in a serene Day: This is strangely eclips'd in an ill Temper, and really disappears, as the Sun wading under a dark Cloud. But what made his Temper the more glorious, was,

2. *His Grace.* This was what he desir'd above all; he so lov'd Christ, that he endeavour'd what he could to perswade others to love him too. I have heard some thanking God, that they ever knew him. He began betimes to preach Christ in his private Conversation, who never liv'd to preach him in any publick Congregation. His Life was so free from Stains, and his
Desires

Desires after Grace so fervent and practical, that I cannot but think he was sincerely Gracious betimes: Especially when I reflect upon,

3. That *Spirit of Prayer* he had. He was frequent, and enlarg'd in his Duty. I have sometimes heard him so heavenly and rais'd, that I have been ashamed of my self, that one of his Years should be so lively, and I so dull. It is but rare in one of his Age, before he undertakes a Journey, to spend a whole Day in Fasting and Prayer, that he may be kept from the Temptations of the Places where he was going. It is but rare for one of his Age, when in a Journey, to rise in the Night, (as *David* of old) to redeem Time for Prayer, which I am satisfied he hath done. How was he us'd to be rapt up in another World in Prayer! I am sure our Family hath lost more serious Prayers every Week, than there are Mornings and Evenings in it. I am sure I have lost the Advantage of many fervent Cries, he offer'd particularly upon my Account; which I have Reason, to value the more, because of

4. His

4. *His choice Experiences.* These he hath left as a Legacy, under his own Hand; and 'tis a very choice one to me, worthy, I think, of every ones Attendance, but too large to be recounted now; I shall therefore only say; that tho' young, he was acquainted with the Comforts and Joys of the Holy Ghost; which many twice his Age, are utterly Strangers to. He was in his Element when he was speaking about another World. It is said of *Alexander*, that *he recokn'd his Age by his Victories*. If we may reckon the Age of our deceased Friend by his Duties, and Prayers, and Acquaintance with another World, we may say of him, *He liv'd long in a little Time*. He was preparing carefully to attend at the Lord's Table, which only a humble Sense of his own Unworthiness had hindered him from. He prepar'd for the lower Table, but I trust he is gone to the upper Table, to receive there: He was laying in a Stock to serve his Lord on Earth, but is (I hope) remov'd to serve about the Throne, where Thousands of Thousands,

sands, and Ten Thousands of Ten Thousands, are adoring him that sits upon the Throne, and the Lamb, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.


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